

The Story of Fido

by Unknown

Fido's master had to go a long journey across the country to a certain town, and he was carrying with him a large bag of gold to deposit at the bank there. This bag he carried on his saddle, for he was riding, as in those days there were no trains, and he had to travel as quickly as he could.

Fido scampered cheerfully along at the horse's heels, and every now and then the man would call out to her, and Fido would wag her tail and bark back an answer.

The sun was hot and the road dusty, and poor Fido's little legs grew more and more tired. At last they came to a cool, shady wood, and the master stopped, dismounted, and tied his horse to a tree, and took his heavy saddle-bags from the saddle.

He laid them down very carefully, and pointing to them, said to Fido, 'Watch them.'

Then he drew his cloak about him, lay down with his head on the bags, and soon was fast asleep.

Little Fido curled herself up close to her master's head, with her nose over one end of the bags, and went to sleep too. But she did not sleep very soundly, for her master had told her to watch, and every few moments she would open her eyes and prick up her ears, in case anyone were coming.

Her master was tired and slept soundly and long—much longer than he had intended. At last he was awakened by Fido's licking his face. The dog saw that the sun was nearly setting, and knew that it was time for her master to go on his journey.

The man patted Fido and then jumped up, much troubled to find he had slept so long. He snatched up his cloak, threw it over his horse, untied the bridle, sprang into the saddle, and calling Fido, started off in great haste. But Fido did not seem ready to follow him. She ran after the horse and bit at his heels, and then ran back again to the woods, all the time barking furiously. This she did several times, but her master had no time to heed her and galloped away, thinking she would follow him.

At last the little dog sat down by the roadside, and looked sorrowfully after her master, until he had turned a bend in the road. When he was no longer in sight she sprang up with a wild bark, and ran after him again. She overtook him just as he had stopped to water his horse at a brook that flowed across the road. She stood beside the brook and barked so savagely that her master rode back and called her to him; but instead of coming she darted off down the road still barking.

Her master did not know what to think, and began to fear that his dog was going mad. Mad dogs are afraid of water, and act in a strange way when they see it. While the man was thinking of this, Fido came running back again, and dashed at him furiously. She leapt at the legs of his horse, and even jumped up and bit the toe of her master's boot. Then she ran down the road again, barking with all her might.

Her master was now sure that she was mad, and, taking out his pistol he shot her. He rode away

quickly, for he loved her dearly and could not bear to see her die.

He had not ridden very far when he stopped suddenly. He felt under his coat for his saddle-bags. They were not there!

Could he have dropped them, or had he left them behind in the wood where he had rested? He felt sure they must be in the wood, for he could not remember having picked them up or fastening them to his saddle.

He turned his horse and rode back again as hard as he could.

When he came to the brook he sighed and said, 'Poor Fido!' but though he looked about he could see nothing of her. When he crossed the brook he saw some drops of blood on the ground, and all along the road he still saw drops of blood. Tears came into his eyes, and he felt very sad and guilty, for now he understood why little Fido had acted so strangely. She knew that her master had left behind his precious bags of gold, and so she had tried to tell him in the only way she could.

All the way to the wood lay the drops of blood. At last he reached the wood, and there, all safe, lay the bags of gold, and beside them, with her little nose lying over one end of them, lay faithful Fido, who, you will be pleased to hear, recovered from her wound, and lived to a great age.

Source:

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